Memorandum

We make lives better through connections.

To: Board of Directors

From: Debra A. Johnson, General Manager and CEO

Date: June 18, 2025

Re: **Major Events, Service Disruptions, and Customer Communications**

This memorandum serves to update the Board of Directors about recent demonstrations in the Denver metro area on Saturday, June 14, 2025, and their impact on RTD's bus and rail services. The information contained herein also addresses a customer comment provided by Director Benker on June 16 and answers questions that were raised by Director Nicholson during the Operations, Safety, and Security Committee on June 11, as well as follow-up inquiries sent in a subsequent email on June 17, about RTD's communications before, during, and after major events.

Major Events

On Friday, June 13, Angel Peña, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, sent an email to the Board outlining the agency's efforts to prepare for multiple protests that were slated to take place the next day at several locations across the RTD's service area. As communicated in that email, RTD maintains several contingency plans that can be readily implemented if an external event disrupts fixed-route bus and rail services. External major events can include severe weather, large public demonstrations, concerts, parades, professional sporting events and security incidents. The agency maintains a common operating plan across all service modes to ensure an appropriate, event-specific response can be implemented.

RTD also regularly communicates and coordinates with external entities, including the Denver Police Department (DPD), to receive status updates and risk assessments prior to any major event that has a potential to impact service. These established lines of open communication ensure RTD can quickly incorporate information from public safety partners, make necessary operational adjustments, and deploy agency resources as needed or warranted. During the demonstrations on June 14, RTD staff was part of Denver's emergency operations center to ensure the agency received real-time updates that would inform service delivery adjustments.

Denver Union Station's Closure

In the agency's June 13 communique to Directors, Mr. Peña shared that RTD was prepared for several different operational scenarios based on the demonstrations, including rerouting and holding buses and trains, closing transit facilities, and deploying additional staff or resources. Staff also internally met in the days leading up to the planned demonstrations to discuss the contingency plans and ensure there was a firm understanding of the contingency plans.

At approximately 1 p.m. on June 14, RTD began rerouting D and H line trains from the Downtown Loop to Denver Union Station (DUS). This decision was made based on the movement of demonstrators near Stout and California streets. Bus routes serving the area were also detoured around the demonstrators. At 3:30 p.m., light rail, commuter rail, and bus services into Denver Union Station were suspended. All trains continued to operate, outside the downtown area, along the remainder of their individual lines. Bus services were suspended in and out of DUS and continued to provide connections outside the immediate vicinity.

The decision to temporarily close DUS was made out of an abundance of caution using real-time information received from law enforcement. DPD and RTD Transit Police (RTD-PD) were monitoring the movement of a small group of demonstrators, and it was deemed significantly likely that the crowd was headed to DUS. The group of demonstrators had broken away from the larger crowd of peaceful demonstrators and began challenging DPD in downtown Denver. Due to the volatility of the situation and its proximity to DUS, staff made the decision to close the intermodal hub as a safeguard. The decision was made in alignment with the agency's law enforcement partners and according to RTD's emergency operations plan.

When the decision was made to close DUS, RTD-PD officers and transit security personnel immediately began safeguarding the facility and engaging with customers to share information about the temporary closure. Communications staff was also at DUS to answer customers' questions and provide service-related information. In an after-action meeting about the incident, it was shared that several customers appreciated staff's willingness to provide customer support during an unpredictable and disruptive time.

DUS remained closed until approximately 5:15 p.m. when law enforcement indicated that the small group of demonstrators were no longer an immediate threat. Later in the evening, DUS was again temporarily closed for approximately 90 minutes based on information from law enforcement and the actions of demonstrators in the area. Services again resumed in and out of DUS at 11:15 p.m. The safety of employees and customers is paramount to RTD, and the agency will always make operational decisions to safeguard lives based on real-time information received from law enforcement.

Media Relations

On Friday, June 13, RTD sent a news release to more than 750 news organizations, reporters, bloggers, and stakeholders about the potential for demonstration-related service disruptions. On June 14, communications staff also called metro area newsrooms to provide real-time updates about the closure and reopening of DUS. Since a majority of the public and customers were going to news websites to receive information, staff focused on ensuring the media received real-time updates throughout the day.

Service Alerts

When planned and unplanned events, maintenance projects, or mechanical issues interfere with RTD's schedule, the agency sends Service Alerts to customers. The real-time alerts provide information about detours, delays, closures, and other disruptions that may affect a customer's trip. Service Alerts are available by bus route or rail line and are sent via email and SMS, depending on the customer's preference. In addition to being directly sent to customers, all Service Alerts are also posted online, available in the Next Ride app, and shared with multiple downstream systems and third-party mobile apps.

Service Alerts are managed, drafted, and disseminated by RTD's Customer Care team, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. This includes disseminating alerts on social media and RTD's network of Variable Message Signs (VMS). Bus dispatch maintains the responsibility for sending all unplanned service disruptions 24/7. Outside regular business hours, rail-related Service Alerts are managed, drafted, and disseminated by light rail controllers, commuter rail controllers, and Denver Transit Operators (DTO) for the A, B, and G lines. During unplanned events or disruptions, staff's first responsibility is to ensure RTD maintains safe operations, and frontline employees have accurate and timely information that supports the safe movement of buses and trains. Service Alerts are then prioritized after

frontline staff have received all relevant information.

On June 14, Customer Care staff was made available to support the dissemination of Service Alerts. This proactive decision ensured controllers and dispatchers could focus on the safe movement of vehicles without also trying to draft and disseminate the customer-facing communications. In total, RTD sent 55 individual Service Alerts to customers related to disruptions and detours that were caused by the demonstrations. This number does not include any alerts that were sent unrelated to the demonstrations.

Due to the high volume of Service Alerts that were sent in a short window of time, RTD experienced a technology-related issue with its server. For approximately one hour after DUS resumed bus and rail operations, RTD's Service Alert system did not immediately clear the dozens of previous alerts related to the situation. Since each alert is separately sent and removed, the system experienced a backlog of commands. Each Service Alert had to individually cycle through the process of being cleared on RTD's website, the Next Ride app, downstream systems, and third-party mobile applications, as well as sending SMS messages and emails. This process took approximately one hour to be completed.

Platform Signs, Audio Announcements, and Web Banners

RTD's Service Alert system also offers the ability to send disruption information to the Variable Message Signs (VMS) that are mounted at rail stations. The digital signs have speakers that will also announce the alerts for customers. All impacted light rail stations broadcasted the service disruptions and the closure of DUS. However, alerts were not sent to the DUS commuter rail platforms, meaning there were no digital or audio announcements provided to A, B, G, and N line customers. Denver Transit Operators (DTO) has sole responsibility for managing the VMS system for commuter rail, and RTD is actively engaging with DTO staff to understand why that step was missed during the protests and to provide remediation training if needed.

Customer Care Call Center

RTD's Telephone Information Center (TIC) experienced a significant volume of customer calls during the protests. In total, RTD received 1,459 individual calls related to the demonstrations, and average speed of answer was 3:07. For comparison, on Saturday, June 7, the call center answered 753 calls, which is a typical number for agents working a weekend shift. In the future, RTD will offer overtime pay for TIC agents who volunteer to work during night and weekend events that have a likelihood of being disruptive to bus and rail services.

Employee and Customer Safety

As noted above, the safety of RTD employees and customers is paramount, and the agency will always make operational decisions that uphold that priority to safeguard lives. While the June 14 service disruptions were inconvenient for customers, it is important to emphasize that RTD's employees and customers did not experience any injuries, accidents, property damage, or other safety concerns related to the demonstrations. The temporary detours and closures were performed professionally and efficiently, without incident, utilizing the agency's approach of OneRTD.

Should any Director have feedback or additional follow-up questions related to this topic, please contact me directly.

Thank you.